



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting December 2, 2021

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Chair Roberts virtually on WebEx.

The meeting was streamed on:

<https://soundtransit.webex.com/soundtransit/onstage/g.php?MTID=e446cb8e099e284aedb8188f2cbd4f484>

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember	(P) Joe McDermott, King County Council Vice Chair

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(A) Nicola Smith, Lynnwood Mayor
(P) Debora Juarez, Seattle City Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Ed Prince, Renton City Councilmember	(P) Kristina Walker, Tacoma City Councilmember

Josephine Gamboa, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Welcome Boardmember Walker

Chair Roberts welcomed Tacoma City Councilmember, Kristina Walker, to her first official meeting as a Committee member.

Monthly Contract Report

The monthly contract report was included in members meeting packets for review.

Farewell

Chair Roberts took a moment to acknowledge his last meeting as Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair. He shared gratitude and praise for staff and the Committee's work throughout the years in accomplishing the projects at hand and most particularly involving sustainability.

CEO Report

Boardmember McDermott arrived at this time.

Chief executive officer Peter Rogoff gave the CEO Report.

Chair Roberts – CEO Rogoff also acknowledged Chair Roberts dismissal as the Committee Chair and

noted a proper farewell at the December 2021 Board meeting will be given.

Link Incident – On the evening of November 26, 2021, following the Apple Cup game at Husky stadium, a series of events resulted in temporary cessation of Link light rail service and inconvenience to Link passengers traveling both north and southbound. CEO Rogoff charged the agency's internal auditor with investigating all aspects of what went wrong that evening. The issues spanned through a number of different Sound Transit departments including Operations, Communications, Safety and Security, Customer Service, Passenger Experience and oversight of the King County Metro personnel who operated and maintained the Link light rail service.

He explained the incident involved a relatively full northbound train of passengers that became disabled in the tunnel approximately 1,000 feet north of University of Washington Station. The train came to a very abrupt stop that was jolting to passengers. The occurrence had not been previously experienced. The train experienced a near complete severance of its train line, which was the electronic cable connecting the four cars forming the train. This cable controlled most key functions of the train including normal braking and propulsion systems as well as doors and lighting. The train brakes immediately deployed after the cable was severed and the lights went out in the cars, leaving only the lights outside on the tunnel ceiling for illumination. The operator did not have any way to know what had happened and they began troubleshooting the failure with the assistance of the Link Control Center. This was normal troubleshooting protocol practice but this particular incident was far more severe.

While attempting to restart the train systems, train functions, including the intercoms, were unavailable during each reboot process. Within 11 minutes of the train stopping, and before the intercom announcements were made, some passengers, due to lack of sufficient communications, used emergency evacuation mechanisms on the train doors to self-evacuate the train. Other passengers observed the people exiting and soon were joined by more passengers. They were outside the train on the emergency walkway next to the tracks. Staff executed appropriate safety protocols to stop operations of Link trains in both directions throughout the area to protect the passengers that were walking on the walkway.

Sound Transit deployed a rescue train that travelled through the southbound tunnel cautiously to pick up stranded passengers. Other passengers walked through University Station and possibly to the U District Station on their own. The process of ensuring all passengers had been removed from the tunnel so that operations could resume, took approximately 75 minutes. Service from the University of Washington Station northbound was initially restored with single tracking around the disabled train with delays and was restored about three hours later. The disabled train was then towed away. Trains continued running southbound with occasional delays.

Throughout the process, not only did passengers on board receive insufficient communications, but all passengers attempting to use the Link system that evening, especially north of University of Washington Station.

CEO Rogoff apologized on behalf of all staff at Sound Transit and noted the agency's commitment to safety and providing good service to passengers. He informed the Committee of actions that would take place moving forward. While waiting for the audit findings in the investigation, other areas of focus were needed from staff. Staff was focused on identifying what happened to the train and addressing the passengers on the interrupted train and neglected to keep other passengers informed. The breakdown of existing communications protocols caused staff to not issue timely rider alerts leaving many other passengers unaware of the event that had occurred. Safety protocols and procedures on how to evacuate passengers, and education for passengers on safe evacuations, must be addressed.

Lastly, he noted a presentation would be given later in the meeting to address a recent security incident near Mount Baker Station.

Boardmember Juarez asked about the investigation timeline and when information would become

available to constituents. CEO Rogoff responded the goal for a response was within 30 days. The investigation itself had an unknown completion date solely to ensure the root cause of the incident wasn't rushed and handled thoroughly. She also asked a question regarding the Mount Baker Station incident in which she would share the information with District 2 Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales. She asked what the agency would do going forward regarding security issues around Mount Baker. CEO Rogoff advised Boardmember Juarez to pause on questions for the Mount Baker incident as he noted a security presentation would be given later in the meeting that may address her concerns.

Committee Vice Chair McDermott thanked CEO Rogoff for his way of addressing the incidents and how the agency would learn and adapt to those situations moving forward.

CEO Rogoff mentioned he was going to provide information on situations that related to safety and security at the Northgate Station but instead he would send those communications to the Committee via email.

Public comment

Chair Roberts announced that public comment would be accepted via email to emailtheboard@soundtransit.org and would also be accepted verbally.

There following people provided written public comment:

Joe Kunzler

The following people provided verbal public comment:

Joe Kunzler

Business Items

Items for Committee final action

November 4, 2021, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Boardmember Baker, seconded by Boardmember McDermott and carried by consent of all Board members present that the minutes of the November 4, 2021 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2021-71: Recommending the Finance and Audit Committee forward the Enhancement, State of Good Repair, Administrative and Transit Operations portions of the Proposed 2022 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Jenny Stephens, Deputy Executive Director of Financial Planning, Analysis and Budget, provided the staff presentation.

Chair Roberts commented that a lot of new projects that were mentioned were focused on IT and asked what steps were incorporated to include IT security and hardening systems to cyber-attack.

Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer, addressed Chair Roberts question. He explained that the network redesign was inclusive to security design across each system.

Motion No. M2021-71 was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Prince.

Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Debora Juarez
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince
Kristina Walker
Paul Roberts

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2021-71 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2021-72: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Slalom, LLC to increase the authorized contract amount for the SharePoint Microsoft 365 migration and solution services in the amount of \$670,000 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$5,795,000.

Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2021-72 was moved by Boardmember McDermott and seconded by Boardmember Baker.

Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Debora Juarez
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince
Kristina Walker
Paul Roberts

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2021-72 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2021-73: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a five-year contract with Hallcon Corporation to provide Station Agent Program services in the amount of \$6,912,916, with a 10 percent contingency of \$691,292, for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$7,604,208.

Marcus Clark, Deputy Executive Director for Passenger Services, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2021-73 was moved by Boardmember Prince and seconded by Boardmember Baker.

Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Debora Juarez
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince
Kristina Walker
Paul Roberts

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2021-73 be approved as presented.

Reports to the Committee

Performance Metrics Review

Emily Nutsch, Operations Performance Manager, provided the report for the October 2021 data. Trip Delivery Reporting, which was under the Dependable category, was introduced and available for viewing on the online dashboard. Ms. Nutsch explained that metrics would appear differently across all modes. She noted her team was working on how to identify the quantity of trips missing versus gathering all the data from how many trains were sent out based on the schedule.

On-Time Performance data showed ST Express at 88 percent and Sounder at 97 percent. Safety metric data for Central Link showed two reportable collisions. Tacoma Link and Sounder had zero reports. ST Express had four reportable collisions primarily through Community Transit which had been through investigation. Ridership included figures from the Northgate Station opening and showed an increase of 72 percent. She explained to the Committee that they were working with partners to gather analytics to explain what types of experiences riders were having – such as, if a passenger were to ride ST Express then transfer to Link services. She noted that the increase in ridership could have been assisted by the increase in local sporting events and there may be a slight dip in percentages reported at the following meeting since those events do not occur monthly.

Chair Roberts showed interest in knowing if ridership results were comparable to other systems nationwide and asked what was anticipated in the near future. He requested that information be shared at the January 2022 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting. Ms. Nutsch replied that the team was currently working with federal data and would have that information available. CEO Rogoff commented on the need to look at what other agencies were operating and the fiscal strength to provide service. He wanted the Committee to understand some agencies could be waiting on higher ridership levels before releasing higher amounts of service which could be in part of financial necessity. ST was able to provide more service to regain passengers and that would need to be factored in when comparing to other systems around the nation. Chair Roberts appreciated and recognized the distinction when comparing data.

John Carini, Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances, provided the Vertical Conveyance report reflecting November 2021 data. All station conveyance availability reached their targets, with the exception of the Downtown Tunnel escalators and elevators. Northgate Link Extension (NGLE) elevators at Northgate and Roosevelt stations performed at target levels while University District (U District) station had issues with multiple intermittent concerns that had since been resolved. The NGLE escalators at Roosevelt station performed at target level while Northgate and U District stations underperformed. Mr. Carini noted the overall drop in mechanical adjustments. The underperformance was caused by other categories such as misuse, environmental issues, or passengers falling down escalators. When an incident of that matter occurs, the equipment must remain out of service until an inspector can ensure the equipment can be deemed safe.

Chair Roberts asked why certain percentages that were in the mid 90's had a red indicator around it. Mr. Carini explained that target availability per elevator was 97 percent while the target availability for escalators was 95 percent.

Downtown Tunnel Elevators reached target availability through September 2021. Towards the month end, water intrusion occurred and caused multiple conveyances to be taken out of service. Staff with King County Light Rail were working to restore the elevators and escalators by removing water, fixing pumps, clean-up of debris, and fixing drain lines. Five escalators were out of service in September 2021. The heavy rainfall following that month caused water intrusion and therefor three additional escalators were placed as out of service.

The Ridership Dashboard on the ST website had been updated and could now provide the ability to look further into each station location availability and provide a deeper dive into each piece of equipment at that station.

Boardmember Baker noted his close observance to vertical conveyances as it carried great importance to the community and to those that depend on it. He asked why elevators and escalators were never quite performing at 100 percent month over month. Mr. Carini responded that many times it would be due to scheduled maintenance. Any experience to service removal of equipment would have an overall effect to performance percentages that could include scheduled maintenance, vandalism issues, mechanical outages, misuse, or any other barricade to passenger use. Boardmember Baker asked if there were other means to arrive to street level with these outages. Mr. Carini replied that scheduled maintenances were coordinated in advance to have Customer Service send out rider alerts of ingress or egress options at certain stations so passengers could plan ahead. Boardmember Baker noted his personal use of the conveyances and related to the importance of knowing how to exit a station without use of an extended route.

Vice Committee Chair McDermott asked if about the possibility of scheduling a portion of the required maintenance or inspections to take place after hours when ridership was low or not in service. Mr. Carini answered that could be achieved but with a significant increase to the contract to accommodate after hour operations. He also noted that the scheduling for those timed activities are attempted to take place during off-peak hours.

Security Program Update

CEO Rogoff began by speaking on the current conversations occurring with community members and various elected officials in the Mount Baker community in Seattle's Rainier Valley. Staff had been engaged with community members regarding their concerns about safety in and around the Mount Baker Station. Sound Transit security had also been engaged with Seattle Police Department (SPD) and would continue to collaborate to support the investigation. Near-term and long-term actions were discussed to respond to concerns from the community. CEO Rogoff had been asked to participate in community meetings at the behest of King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay. There was a suggestion to have King County Metro, SPD, King County Sheriff's Office and other agencies, in addition to Sound Transit be involved in said meetings as it was a multi-agency response to the incidents.

Ken Cummins, Director of Public Safety, provided the report to discuss current safety and security of Mount Baker Station. He provided a brief orientation of the station and surroundings which included a map of the station, King County Metro Mount Baker Transit Center, Art Space Building and Franklin High School. An outline was provided to showcase the extent of property lines in which the security officers can perform security services for Sound Transit due to the limits of authority and insurance. He briefed on three key events and their locations in regards to the Mount Baker Station. Event 1 occurred outside of property lines on June 22, 2021 at 1 p.m. that involved a fatal shooting and one deceased victim. Event 2 occurred on property lines on October 22, 2021 at 12:30 a.m. that involved an altercation between three individuals on a light rail vehicle. One individual exited the vehicle and was followed by the other two individuals. The altercation continued on the plaza level and the first individual departed the area to their residence in the Art Space building to retrieve their firearm then returned to the station platform. Shots were then fired but with no injuries nor damage. Event 3 occurred on November 21, 2021 at 10:30 p.m. at the corner of Winthrop and Martin Luther King Way South. Mr. Cummins reported the latest update was that an individual was shot by a second individual. The individual that had been shot produced a knife and stabbed the individual that shot him. The stab wound was fatal and the individual that was shot was taken to Harborview Hospital and was expected to survive. All three events were being, or had been, investigated by SPD and King County Deputy provided support and assistance. Events 1 and 3 had no indication whether the individuals used the light rail system to travel to or from the area using the Mount Baker Station.

Mr. Cummins provided an overview of the Mount Baker Station and listed Top 10 Security Event Stations based on the months of September through October 2021. Those stations listed with higher to lower events were: Tukwila International Boulevard, Federal Way Transit Center, Angle Lake, Northgate, International District, Capitol Hill, Westlake, University of Washington, SeaTac, and Pioneer Square. Northgate Station appeared as an anticipated area of focus for security as it was listed as the fourth highest event station having been opened on October 2, 2021. The top 5 stations had event quantities much higher than that of Mount Baker. Tukwila International Boulevard with 266 events, Federal Way Transit Center with 212 events, Angle Lake with 202 events, Northgate with 192 events, International District with 186 events and Mount Baker with 46 events. He then reviewed the top five stations but with events with potential harm to passengers from the months of January to October 2021. Events included crimes against persons, harassment, attempted suicides and intentionally set fires, they did not include medical emergencies. Those stations listed from highest to lowest number of events were Tukwila International Boulevard with 242 events, International District with 118 events, Beacon Hill with 86 events, Westlake with 72 events, Auburn with 62 events, and Mount Baker with 15 events.

Sound Transit deployed resources where the largest risks were identified. Constant monitoring of the risks and deployment were adjusted based on those risks. Sound Transit had a contract with the King County Sheriff's office that provided law enforcement. Contracted security was relied on to provide the bulk of public safety services. Both law enforcement and security were present on certain levels 24 hours a day 7 days a week. 2020 and 2021 had been difficult to maintain budgeted and planned security levels. Securitas was a long term provider and had been struggling to provide qualified candidates and had significant turnover with management structures. Their staffing had dropped as low as 60 percent which caused a second contract with another security provider called Phoenix Protective to provide mobile patrols and brief relief to Securitas in order to staff critical areas. He reviewed the Security and Law Enforcement Budget through 2018 leading into the proposed budget for 2022. Each year a proposed budget is brought to the Board to address increased risks.

Sound Transit had a preference to utilize technology over staffing, however, staffing was still necessary. The contracted security was used for static postings, operational support, and customer service support. In general, security was posted at high risk stations, terminus stations, underground stations, and revenue vehicle storage yards. Mobile security patrols were used to patrol and as randomized patrol at other facilities, park and rides, garages, and warehouses. King County Sheriff's Deputies responded to dispatched calls related to transit issues across the systems and also rail collisions to reduce delays in returning to service. Deputies were assigned to geographic zones with focus on high event locations, which were the top five stations mentioned previously.

Actions taken to address the Mount Baker Station incidents included increased contract security and law enforcement presence. Increased security patrols began in late 2020 due to community concerns. In response to the first homicide in June 2021, security patrols were increased to 6 per shift and 12 per day. In response to the second event in November 2021, actions taken were fixed security posts and it was a goal to provide 24 hours a day security coverage to the maximum extent possible until the end of 2021. In response to the third event in December 2021, actions taken were to increase daily law enforcement patrols to at least five total hours per day during, randomly throughout the day, through the month of December at undisclosed times. Search type operations were also planned to incorporate plain clothed law enforcement that would sustain a presence by available law enforcement resources.

Ongoing efforts included safety and community relations team to participate in bi-weekly community and elected calls, continue to be on the South Precinct Interagency Calls hosted by the SPD, expedited process to improve lighting at the station once supply chain issues had been resolved, develop Transit Oriented Development (TOD) affordable housing opportunities on adjacent properties currently encumbered by homeless encampment, and work with community to activate the Mt. Baker plaza area.

Boardmember Juarez thanked Mr. Cummins for his presentation and noted she would be sharing the information with Councilmember Morales. She appreciated the expression of Sound Transit increasing

security, looked into landscaping and would be addressing the lighting situation. However, she noted the graph that was provided that showed passenger experiences and events that occurred at Mount Baker in relation to the other stations, showing Mount Baker with a lower quantity of events. Her concern was the passenger experiences that were provided did not translate to deaths. She asked if a visual could be provided to place those stations in relation to deaths only. CEO Rogoff responded that the data for that request was available and could be shared. Boardmember Juarez clarified that she was requesting a visual of all stations where deaths had occurred. She understood certain stations had high levels of crimes, which could mean a number of events, but she was solely focused on stations with violent deaths and in comparison to any particular neighborhood. CEO Rogoff replied that the presentation was to respond to the security incidence of potential harm, such as stabbings, fist fights, or weapons used. He committed to providing the data for fatalities and noted the agency would fall as part of a neighborhood and certain events could not be predicted to flow into property lines. He referenced the staffing percentages of contracted security and law enforcement that was shared during the presentation and explained that it did not provide a visual of the percentage of SPD foot patrol men that were available in the South precinct which was an important piece in how Mount Baker was patrolled. Boardmember Juarez observed a higher amount of societal communication that followed the Apple Cup incident which involved passengers self-evacuating the light rail then walking towards a station rather than the Mount Baker incident which involved a fatality. She stated she was looking forward to receiving updates, including the lights situation, given the committee's focus on Rider Experience and Operations.

CEO Rogoff ended with acknowledging the security hardships involving the Northgate Station restrooms. Since the station opening, more than 160 security and safety calls were received related to the restrooms. To ensure the restroom's usability and accessibility, the agency had increased security measures.

Executive session

None.

Other business

None.

Next meeting

Thursday, January 6, 2021

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Virtual meeting held via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Paul Roberts
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

APPROVED on _____, JG.

ATTEST:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator